

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 10/700,465
Docket No. Q78326

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are all the claims pending in the application. New claims 5-7 have been added.

As an initial matter, the Examiner has acknowledged the claim for foreign priority and confirmed receipt of the priority document.

In addition, the Examiner has considered the references submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 5, 2003, indicated by the Examiner's initials next to the reference numbers listed on the PTO/SB/08 forms.

Claims 1-4 are all of the independent claims. Claims 1 and 2 are independent claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1- 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite. Applicants have made stylistic changes to independent claims 1 and 2, and respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw this rejection in view of these changes.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Foege et al. (US 4,379,611).

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite that --in a developed condition the support portion includes a first portion provided adjacent to said strip-like interconnecting portion, a side wall portion connected to said first portion, and a second portion provided substantially parallel to the first portion so as to oppose said first portion, said second portion

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being connected to said side wall portion--. This amendment is fully supported in the original specification at least by the non-limiting embodiment discussed at 17:8-18-7 & Figs. 1-3.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 1 at least because Foege does not teach or suggest all of the recitations of amended claim 1.

For example, Foege does not teach or suggest that the body portion includes a second portion provided substantially parallel to the first portion so as to oppose said first portion. Instead, there is no structure at a position opposing the first end 42 of the body 32. See Foege at Fig. 4.

As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

Claims 2-4

Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Heimueller et al. (US 6,033,262).

As an initial matter, Applicants have made a minor clarifying amendment to claim 2. Specifically, we propose amending independent claim 2 to recite that the wide portion of the interconnecting portion is “provided at an end of the interconnecting portion that is adjacent to the protective portion.”

Applicants respectfully traversing the rejection of claim 2 at least because Heimueller does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, Heimueller does not teach or suggest the claimed connector having a female terminal with a strip-like interconnecting portion interconnecting the protective portion and the support portion, the interconnecting portion having

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a wide portion that is provided at an end of the interconnecting portion that is adjacent to the protective portion; wherein the wide portion of the interconnecting portion abuts against an abutment portion of a housing when the female terminal is inserted into the cavity in an improper manner.

Heimueller discloses a terminal 1 having a detent sleeve 20 and two spring arms 13 provided within the detent sleeve 20. See Heimueller at Figs. 2 & 3. A contact pin is inserted between the two spring arms 13.

According to the rejection, it is the Examiner's position that the polarizing tab 26 of Heimueller corresponds to the recited "wide portion." However, Heimueller's polarizing tab 26 cannot correspond to the recited "wide portion" at least because the tab 26 is not provided at an end of the of the interconnecting portion that is adjacent to the protective portion. Instead, the polarizing tab 26 is provided at a middle portion of the detent sleeve 20. See Figs. 2 and 3.

The claimed invention includes a wide portion that is adjacent to the protective portion prevents the female terminal from being inserted into the housing in an improper manner before the female terminal passes an abutment portion. In contrast, it appears that the polarizing tab 26 of Heimueller only stops the insertion of the female terminal 1 after much of the terminal has already been inserted past the abutment portion.

As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 2.

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With respect to dependent claims 3 and 4, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of these claims based on their dependency from independent claim 2.

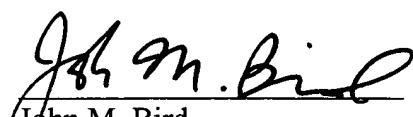
New Claims

Finally, in order to provide alternative claim coverage, Applicants have added new dependent claims 5-7, which depend from claim 2.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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